

Wycombe W. 4, Witney T. 0

IN their final pre-season friendly before Saturday's league kick off, Wycombe Wanderers produced a highly promising performance with a marked improvement amongst the forwards against Witney Town last night (Monday).

Four goals were scored in all, Loughborough College's Derek Harris and the evergreen Tony Horseman sharing the goalscoring honours. Harris, centre forward, went a long way to filling the gap left by Keith Searle. Fast and incisive, he combined well with Anthony and Horseman. 'Bodger', in his first game of the season, looked every bit as good as last term and seems to go on forever. What will Wycombe Wanderers do without him?

The Wycombe team against Witney was about the strongest they could field, with Mick Holifield still on holiday. The defence looked sound, while both full backs are in prime form. Midfield, without a fully fit Terry Reardon, is also ticking over nicely and for the first time in these warm-ups, the forwards looked a match winning unit.

Wanderers started with a string of long range shots, peppered in from every angle. They went ahead after 26 minutes. Delaney headed the ball through the defence to Harris who was unceremoniously brought down by Stokes just outside the box. Everyone knew what would happen next, including, I suspect, the Witney 'keeper. But there was nothing he could do as Horseman curled a lovely free kick around the "wall" and into the top right hand corner.

In the 36th minute Horseman struck again. Harris received a pass from Howard Kennedy on the flank and, spotting Horseman moving in, sent a perfect cross into the six yard box for Tony to nod home. Harris was rewarded for his efforts two minutes before the break when he showed great maturity in taking a 50 yard ball from Mead and slotting it past Nye for the third goal.

The Blues made several changes in the second half and with three goals under their belts, tended to become over-elaborate. Geoff Anthony held onto the ball a little too long when players were in promising positions although he did go close to scoring himself on several occasions.

Harris, who suffered a cut eye after a collision with Rundle in the second half, completed the scoring in the 78th minute. Horseman made it with perseverance, running onto a ball that seemed lost and crossing over the goalkeeper to allow Harris a tap-in from four yards. **6**

Only a few inches of goalpost robbed Wycombe of a fifth goal — and Ray Eaton of his first for the club — with two minutes left. The move demonstrated the left back's attacking flair when he played a 1-2 with Horseman and crashed a drive against the post only to see the ball rebound straight back to goalkeeper Nye.

Wanderers seemed to treat this match more seriously than the others as it was their final preparation before the Staines game at Loakes Park on Saturday. One swallow doesn't make a summer — but this performance will give the team confidence and if they can go on producing the stream of chances that flowed last night, they should do well this term.

WYCOMBE: J. Maskell; P. Birdseye, K. Mead, J. Delaney, R. Eaton; H. Kennedy (sub. G. Mackenzie 72 mins.), D. Cotterell (sub. T. Reardon 45 mins., Reardon sub. Cotterell 75 mins.), D. Alexander; A. Horseman, D. Harris (sub. Kennedy 80 mins.), G. Anthony.

WITNEY: J. Nye; N. Hartigan, A. Jeffries, T. Stokes (sub. I. Rundle 45 mins.), C. Austin; R. McFarlan, P. Ball, S. Freeman; D. Jones, M. Prescot, T. Bailey. Subs. J. Haggis, D. Plass (not used).

Half-time: 3-0. Goalscorers,
Wycombe — Horseman 2 (26, 36),
Harris 2 (43, 78).